

Ship Island is about ten miles long
 and from a few rods to a mile and a
 quarter wide the soil if it can be called
 such every part being covered ^{with} white sand
 the island lies east and west on the Western
 extremity is Fort Massachusetts. This structure
 is built of brick has embrasures for 24 guns
 and if put in good repair would be a
~~strong~~ fortification besides the fort this
 is a light house and on brick building
 now now for a hospital, on the upper
 end of the island large pine trees grow
 and a number of Palmettos The animals
 here are snakes loads racoons hogs & alligators
 fresh water is plenty and each company has
 its well made by digging a hole in the sand
 and sinking a broad barrel for a curb
 I went to the upper end of the island
 yesterday in charge of a foraging party
 and we bagged a crocodile 12 feet long
 all is ^{and} ~~every~~ bustle here, a large naval

He belongs to the regular Army
and is a splendid officer
we are attached to the 1st Brigade
Gen Phelps also the 7th & 8th and
10th Batteries which are expected
every day Gen Butler arrived
on Thursday last our destination
is New Orleans we have the Brigade
now commanded by Gen Phelps Willcox
and Shufeldt our Brigade Gen Lee
has the Post of Honor being on
the right we shall leave here in
about 4 weeks write as soon as you
reared this and tell me all the news
Send me the last 5 no of the Border
papers give my respects to all
enquiring friends Tell Bill to write me
we have not been heard yet but
expect to every day I will write you
the next steamer I must stop
as the mail closes in five minutes
I am acting adjutant now and
have a great deal to do I have
a great deal more to write but have
no time
Love a 2nd

force is concentrating here and in mass
 quantity of supplies for the army is arriving
 and everything betokens a vigorous and effective
 campaign the Morton fleet is just
 coming in to the harbor which consists
 I am told of a hundred sail this is also
 several Gun Boats A man of war here and
 Transports so numerous to mention this
 is 12,000 troops on the island now and
 a great many ^{more} expected. a great many of
 the regiments are under marching orders
 the expedition will sail as soon as Gen
 Butler arrives its destination is New Orleans
 the fleet is to consist of one hundred vessels
 the sailing of this fleet will be one of
 the most magnificent sights ever
 witnessed in America this was three
 regiments arrived here to day from
 New York two consisting of the Indiana
 21st Wisconsin 4th Michigan 4th all
 well drilled

Capt P E Holcomb is
 assigned to the Command of our Battery